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SUBJECT: 64TH UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY: EAST ASIAN AND PACIFIC  
ISLANDS' PERFORMANCE

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Classified By: AMBASSADOR ROSEMARY DICARLO FOR REASONS 1.4 (B & D)

#### SUMMARY AND INTRODUCTION:

¶1. (U) This cable was prepared by Ambassador Joan Plaisted, who served as Senior Area Adviser for East Asia and the Pacific (EAP) to the 64th United Nations General Assembly (UNGA).

¶2. (U) EAP countries in general welcomed the new era of U.S. engagement and partnership this 64th General Assembly where the United States sought anew to work through the United Nations in pursuit of enhanced global cooperation. In his General Assembly address, President Obama cited the United States paying our budgetary and peacekeeping arrears, our rejoining the Human Rights Council, and our embracing the Millennium Development Goals. He could have added our recommitment to ending climate change and endorsement of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty. U.S. reengagement was evidenced in the President's chairing a special session of the Security Council on non-proliferation and disarmament and Secretary of State Hillary Clinton's chairing a session to condemn violence against women and co-chairing with Secretary General Ban Ki-moon a Food Security meeting. Pacific Island Permanent Representatives (Permreps) to the United Nations are still commenting on how much their heads of state and government appreciated Secretary Clinton's meeting with them on the margins of the UNGA. This clear message of reengagement helped to advance new policies on non-proliferation and disarmament, climate change and other environmental issues, human rights and democracy, and the UN Budget - the U.S. goals for the 64th UNGA. Other U.S. priorities included peacekeeping and conflict management, sustainable development, combating gender violence, and UN management reforms, including enforcing budget discipline in

the regular and peacekeeping scales of assessments, as the UNGA conducts its triennial review of the scale of assessments this year.

13. (U) The policy of active engagement was reflected in committee votes where the United States worked hard to avoid being isolated, if possible. On disarmament and nonproliferation issues in the First Committee, the United States cast ten "no" votes this year, down from 23 last year, and in no case did we vote "no" in isolation. Our going from a "no" vote to co-sponsorship of Japan's resolution on the complete elimination of nuclear weapons was reportedly front page news in Japan. The Australians were delighted when we co-sponsored and voted for their resolution on the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty rather than voted against it as we had done since 2001. We were able to abstain rather than vote "no" on the ASEAN resolution on the Southeast Asia Nuclear Weapon Free Zone Treaty. On social, humanitarian, and cultural issues in the Third Committee, delegates broke out in unusual applause when the United States joined consensus on the Rights of the Child for the first time in a decade. The new U.S. flexibility enabled us to join consensus for the first time on Right to Food too. On Right to Development the United States was no longer the sole "no" vote, now joined by the EU. However, in the Second (Economic and Financial) Committee, five resolutions still needed to be voted upon this year, similar to previous years.

14. (U) To achieve U.S. goals for the 64th UN General Assembly (UNGA) session, East Asian and Pacific Islands support was essential. A new resolution this session based on the Goldstone Report was adopted by a vote of 114-18(U.S.)-44. It called on Israel and the Palestinian side to investigate

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alleged war crimes committed during the December 2008-January 2009 conflict. The 18 "no" votes - including those cast by five Pacific Islanders - are the most a resolution dealing with Israel has received since 2005. EAP votes were especially helpful on three Middle East resolutions the United States identified as top priorities. Although these still passed by overwhelming margins, the Pacific Islanders accounted for the majority of the "no" votes with the United States and for many of the abstentions. Voting "no" on all three resolutions with the United States and Israel, along with Canada, were Australia, the Marshall Islands, Micronesia, Nauru, and Palau. In a welcome shift, New Zealand joined the no votes on the Division for Palestinian Rights resolution this session. While Australia moved away from the United States on one vote - the resolution on Palestinian self-determination - this was to reverse the previous government's decision to vote no on resolutions that reference the ICJ decision on the separation barrier. Australia shifted its votes on two resolutions during the 63rd UNGA for the same reason.

15. (SBU) A top U.S. priority again this UNGA was to ensure passage of the Iran human rights resolution, plus resolutions on Burma and the DPRK. In a welcome development, no delegation called for a procedural motion - a "no-action" motion - to try to block the Third Committee from taking up the Iran and Burma resolutions this session. All out efforts by USUN, Washington, and our Posts ensured the Third Committee passed all three human rights resolutions by wider margins than last year. On our top priority, Iran, 14 EAP countries in the Third Committee cast welcome "yes" votes. We picked up an extra "yes" vote this year from Papua New Guinea that had previously abstained. For the second year in a row, Kiribati was able to get its proxy in on time for the Third Committee votes. Due to Iran's assistance, Tuvalu reverted to voting "no," a vote they had cast in the Plenary in 2007 before getting miffed that Iran had not delivered on promised aid and switched back to voting "yes" in 2008. Alas, Iran delivered this year. On Burma, five ASEAN countries were able to abstain this year when Cambodia shifted from being not present to abstaining along with

Indonesia, the Philippines, Singapore, and Thailand. In part influenced by its desire to join ASEAN, Timor-Leste switched to abstaining from a "yes" vote. Tuvalu cast an unhelpful "no" vote. On the DPRK human rights resolution, the only change was Laos going from a "no" vote to deliberately being not present. Third Committee items are expected to come up in the Plenary for a vote on December 18, with the exception of the Burma human rights resolution that due to budgetary implications may be delayed until December 23-24. We again need active lobbying efforts by posts.

¶6. (C) The votes of Pacific Islanders, which now number 14 counting Australia and New Zealand, can no longer be taken for granted as islanders are increasingly courted by Iran, Venezuela, Cuba, and others. Two islands - the Solomon Islands and Tuvalu - have cast their lot with Iran in return for much needed assistance. Cuba offers medical training in Havana to students from several of the islands. As Ambassador Rice commented in her much appreciated November 30 meeting with the Pacific Island Permreps before the Copenhagen climate change conference, all the U.S. can offer is friendship and a principled position; others offer added incentives. For the 65th UNGA, the Senior Advisor would recommend that Secretary Clinton again meet with the Pacific Island heads of state and government. This high-level attention does translate into goodwill and votes at the United Nations. End Summary and Introduction.

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Climate Change Summit and the General Debate  
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¶7. (U) To launch the 64th UNGA, Secretary General Ban Ki-moon convened the largest-ever summit on the climate crisis with the participation of 101 heads of state and government and representatives from 163 countries in the run up to Copenhagen in December. Many leaders confirmed the need to limit global average temperature rise to a maximum of two degrees Celsius. Most vulnerable countries including the small island developing states pushed for an even more stringent 1.5 degree limit. On the mitigation front, Japan's new Prime Minister Yukio Hatoyama was praised for his announcement of an ambitious goal of a 25 percent reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by 2020, against the 1990 level, and the intent to create a Japanese carbon market that would be linked into a global carbon market. Several delegates found President Hu Jintao's announcement too vague that China would be prepared to take additional actions to reduce energy intensity in the context of an international agreement. On adaptation, the European Union announced their support for a fast track funding facility for adaptation and their readiness to provide 5-7 billion Euros to launch it.

¶8. (U) East Asia and Pacific countries in their speeches during the Climate Change Summit and General Debate that followed when almost all of the 192 member states addressed the General Assembly highlighted the deleterious impact of climate change and the global financial, food, and energy crises on their economies. Pacific Island nations appealed for redoubled efforts to address climate change and rising sea levels, which they maintained threaten the security of their people as seen in their General Assembly resolution adopted last June by consensus with U.S. co-sponsorship on "Climate Change and its Possible Security Implications." Papua New Guinea noted the need to resettle 1200 of their citizens and called for 20 percent of any financial or institutional response to climate change to be allocated to deforestation, since deforestation accounts for 20 percent of greenhouse gas emissions. The Philippines referred to their role as coordinator for the G-77 in the climate change talks. New Zealand's new Prime Minister noted climate change must be the 64th UNGA's main focus and announced New Zealand would direct its assistance to the Pacific Islanders. New Zealand also sought support for their Security Council candidacy for

2015-2016. (Australia is a candidate for 2013-2014). Palau's President said his people "cherish" their relationship with the United States and called for a worldwide bottom trawling moratorium. Kiribati's President sought international support for their relocation strategy, saying on climate change, "If we don't act now, who the hell is going to do it."

19. (U) Mongolia's President proposed a North East Asian Summit on climate change and sought support for their subsequently successful candidacy for ECOSOC for 2010-2011. Cambodia warmly welcomed the U.S. initiative to engage the Lower Mekong Basin countries by sharing best practices. Indonesia's Foreign Minister, identifying Israel as the main problem in the Middle East, then praised President Obama's even-handed and multilateral approach and called on other countries to respond to this partnering for peace. Burma's Prime Minister sought an end to sanctions against his country, claiming that since "sanctions are indiscriminate and of themselves a form of violence, they cannot legitimately be regarded as a tool to promote human rights and democracy." Japan's Prime Minister promoted a role for

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his country as a bridge between East and West. The ROK's President announced a tripling of their 2008 level of official development assistance by 2015 and offered to share their experiences to help others find the right development model. He went off text to note he had proposed a "grand bargain" to the DPRK, offering economic development aid in exchange for the DPRK giving up nuclear weapons. Several countries called on the DPRK to uphold their commitments and to pursue Six-Party Talks.

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Anti-Israeli Resolutions  
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110. (SBU) One of the most hotly contested votes this UNGA was on a new resolution based on the Goldstone Report. The resolution, the "Follow-up to the Report of the UN Fact-Finding Mission on the Gaza Conflict," endorsed the report and called on Israel and the Palestinian side to investigate alleged war crimes committed during the December 2008-January 2009 conflict and implied possible UNSC action if either side fails to launch credible investigations. Syria's hard-line negotiating stance allowed the EU to be split and led to more "no" votes and abstentions. The 18 "no" votes are the most a resolution dealing with Israel has received since 2005. The resolution was adopted by a vote of 114-18(U.S.)-44. Pacific Islanders cast five of the "no" votes: Australia, Marshall Islands, Micronesia, Nauru, and Palau. Abstaining were Fiji, Japan, New Zealand, PNG, ROK, Samoa, and Tonga. Voting "yes" were Brunei, Cambodia, China, DPRK, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Mongolia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Solomon Islands, Thailand, Timor-Leste, and Vietnam. Absent were Kiribati, Tuvalu, and Vanuatu. This issue will come up again in February. Assuming there could well be another vote, it is worth noting that Vanuatu's Permrep told the Senior Advisor he could have voted "no", but he had a conflicting appointment. Tuvalu has moved from voting "no" to abstaining to voting "yes" most recently on some Middle East votes, so being not present is a good stance. Fiji's Permrep told the Senior Advisor he is facing criticism from his capital that wants to move toward the Arab position; "his country is kicking his butt" for his abstention. Timor-Leste's Permrep told the Senior Advisor he switched from his instructions to abstain to a "yes" vote after hearing the Israeli Permrep's inflammatory language referring to the Goldstone Committee as "conceived with hatred and delivered in sin"; he maintained that more respect was due to Judge Goldstone. This is a vote to turn around in capital. Another vote to target is Mongolia's disappointing "yes" vote, since Mongolia often abstains or is deliberately absent on Middle East votes. Finally Singapore has good relations with Israel yet votes consistently with the NAM.

¶11. (U) EAP countries were also helpful in adding to the "no" votes and abstentions on three priority resolutions opposed by the United States that extend the mandates of anti-Israeli UN programs established more than a generation ago. These programs contribute neither to the achievement of peace in the region nor to the goal of UN reform. The State Department, under PL 106-113 (Section 721), is required to report by January 15 each year on steps taken to abolish certain UN groups, including these three programs.

¶12. (U) The Plenary vote to extend the mandate of the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices was 92-9(U.S.)-74. Last year's vote was 94 for-8(U.S.)-73. Voting "no" with the U.S. and Israel were Australia, Canada, the

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Marshall Islands, Micronesia, Nauru, and Palau. Panama added the extra "no" vote this year. We had one less EAP "yes" vote when Cambodia was absent this year. The Solomon Islands switched to a "yes" vote from being not present in 2008. Tuvalu switched to being not present from a "yes" vote in 2008, abstaining in 2007, and voting "no" with us in 2005 and ¶2006. EAP picked up two more abstentions from PNG and Vanuatu (both were not present in 2008). The Senior Advisor was able to convince Vanuatu's only remaining delegate to vote this year by providing her with a detailed accounting of their past votes. The Philippines and Thailand again broke ranks with ASEAN to abstain. Also abstaining were Fiji, Japan, Mongolia, New Zealand, the ROK, Samoa, Timor-Leste, and Tonga. Cambodia, Kiribati, and Tuvalu were absent.

¶13. (SBU) The Plenary vote to extend the mandate of the Division for Palestinian Rights of the Secretariat was 112-9(U.S.)-54. Last year the vote was 106-8(U.S.)-57. We picked up a welcome "no" vote from New Zealand. New Zealand's Permrep told the Senior Advisor their new government had given this a good hard look in capital. In a helpful explanation of vote, he opined the resources for the Division for Palestinian Rights can be better spent. (The Division costs \$3 million a year and largely turns out reports). Again joining the U.S., Israel, Canada, and Australia in voting "no" were our traditional small island friends - the Marshall Islands, Micronesia, Nauru, and Palau. Timor-Leste switched to being not present from voting "yes" in 2008. After the Thai Permrep reviewed their past votes and discovered all other ASEAN countries were voting "yes", Thailand switched to a "yes" vote from abstaining in past years. Fiji again abstained as they did in 2008, after voting "yes" in 2007. Also abstaining were Japan, PNG, the ROK, and Samoa. Absent were Kiribati, Mongolia (deliberately), Timor-Leste (deliberately), Tuvalu, and Vanuatu (staff shortage).

¶14. (U) The Plenary vote to extend the mandate of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People was 109-8(U.S.)-55. Last year the vote was 107-8(U.S.)-57. Reflecting their votes on the Division for Palestinian Rights, Thailand switched from abstaining to a "yes" vote to join the other ASEANS and Timor-Leste switched from voting "yes" to being not present. Voting "no" were Australia, the Marshall Islands, Micronesia, Nauru, and Palau. Abstaining were Fiji, Japan, New Zealand, PNG, ROK, Samoa, and Tonga. Absent were Kiribati, Mongolia, Timor-Leste, Tuvalu, and Vanuatu. All other EAP countries voted "yes."

¶15. (SBU) Next year EAP should try to obtain more "no" votes from the islanders, including Samoa and Tonga, and to see if New Zealand, now voting "no" on the Division for Palestinian Rights would join us on the other two priority resolutions in line with their supposed efforts to vote more with the United States on Middle East issues. Prime Minister Key has told us he is very determined to re-think former Prime Minister Clark's position on the debate. We should seek to get Vanuatu to be present for all three resolutions and to



abstain. It was again a staff shortage with a delegate out with the flu that lead to their being not present on two resolutions this year. PNG is now abstaining on all three resolutions. Fiji, which is now abstaining on all three resolutions, also shifted from a "yes" vote to abstaining on the resolution on the Peaceful Settlement of the Question of Palestine and should be urged to do so on other Middle East resolutions too. Timor-Leste's recent welcome votes should be watched in view of their interest to align themselves more

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closely with ASEAN countries in hopes of joining ASEAN. Thailand is now abstaining (along with the Philippines among the ASEANS) on only one of the three resolutions. The high cost - \$3 million annually - of maintaining the mandate for the Division for Palestinian Rights of the Secretariat is a good point to emphasize. It would be useful if the Department could provide more substantive talking points on these resolutions and more advance notice of upcoming votes, allowing for time for demarches.

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Human Rights Resolutions  
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¶16. (U) EAP posts efforts paid off when the Third Committee adopted resolutions on the human rights situations in Iran, Burma, and the DPRK by wider margins than in 2008. These resolutions still have to be voted on in the Plenary on December 18, with the Burma vote expected December 23-24. In a welcome change from past years, no Third Committee delegations called for "no-action" motions - a procedural motion to try to block an item for coming up for a vote. The most important resolution on Iran passed by an overall 26 vote winning margin, compared with a 19 vote margin in the Third Committee in 2008. The Burma resolution saw an overall gain of three "yes" votes, three fewer "no" votes, and two more abstentions compared with last year's Third Committee vote. The DPRK resolution enjoyed a gain of two "yes" votes, five fewer "no" votes, and three more abstentions. In sum, we had a very good showing on all three resolutions. The Pacific Islands again proved to be key to the success of the human rights resolutions. These small delegations made a real effort to be present and will have to make an even greater effort to cover the plenary vote when many delegates will be in Copenhagen for the climate conference. How EAP countries voted is outlined in detail below:

¶17. (SBU) Iran human rights resolution: 74(U.S.)-48-59. Last year's Third Committee vote was 70(U.S.)-51-60. Canada sponsored this resolution and the U.S. cosponsored. EAP gained a good "yes" vote from Papua New Guinea (PNG voted "yes" in 2005 and had abstained since then). Their Permrep carefully reviewed recent developments and told the Senior Advisor he was influenced by the aftermath of the June elections. We lost a "yes" vote when Tuvalu switched from "yes" to "no" due to assistance from Iran. Their Charge, who was trying to understand his government's instructions to vote "no," said Tuvalu was desperate for assistance; without it, they would be gone in ten years, he claimed. Iran has helped to build a sea-wall for protection from global warming and is also helping to finance their students to study in Cuba. (In 2007 Tuvalu shifted from voting "yes" in the Third Committee to voting "no" in the plenary, then returned to their good "yes" votes last year when promised assistance was not delivered). The Solomon Islands continued to abstain. Their Permrep in an explanation of vote called for others to respect the Solomon Islands' position, saying human rights issues should be dealt with in the Human Rights Council, not elsewhere. The Permrep had earlier maintained in a conversation with an EAP/DAS and the Senior Advisor that other countries had a luxury the Solomon Islands can't afford; they need assistance from the international community. For the second year, Kiribati cast a welcome "yes" vote by proxy in the Third Committee. We saw a net gain of one abstention from Cambodia which had been absent last

year.

--Yes: Australia, Fiji, Japan, Kiribati, Marshall Islands,

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Micronesia, Nauru, New Zealand, Palau, PNG, Samoa,  
Timor-Leste,  
Tonga, Vanuatu.

--No: China, DPRK, Indonesia, Malaysia, Myanmar, Tuvalu,  
Vietnam.

--Abstain: Brunei, Cambodia, Laos, Mongolia, Philippines,  
ROK,  
Singapore, Solomon Islands, Thailand.

¶18. (SBU) Burma/Myanmar human rights resolution: 92(U.S.)-26-65. Last year's Third Committee vote was 89(U.S.)-29-63. Because this resolution has budgetary implications, it will come up for a vote very late in the Plenary when some small countries are absent. It was EU-sponsored and the United States again co-sponsored. The resolution strongly condemns the ongoing systematic violations of human rights and fundamental freedoms of the people of Myanmar and expresses grave concern at the recent trial and sentencing of Aung San Suu Kyi while calling for her immediate and unconditional release and the release of all prisoners of conscience. It strongly urges the Government to take the necessary steps towards a free, fair, transparent, and inclusive electoral process, including allowing the participation of all voters and all political parties. The resolution extends the Secretary General's mandate by requesting the SG "to continue to provide his good offices" and to give all necessary assistance to enable his Special Advisor and the Special Rapporteur to discharge their mandates fully and effectively and in a coordinated manner. We picked up a "yes" vote from Micronesia that had embarrassingly missed the Third Committee vote last year. Cambodia moved to an abstention, which was good to be counted, rather than being absent. Timor-Leste shifted from a good "yes" vote last year to abstaining; this very controversial vote in capital had the Foreign Minister ordering the Permrep to abstain and the President instructing him to vote "yes." The Permrep has told the Senior Advisor he intends to vote "yes" in the plenary even if it means being fired. The worst vote was Tuvalu switching to a "no" vote from a "yes" vote last year.

--Yes: Australia, Fiji, Japan, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Micronesia, Mongolia, Nauru, New Zealand, Palau, ROK, Samoa, Tonga, Vanuatu.

--No: Brunei, China, DPRK, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Tuvalu, Vietnam.

--Abstain: Cambodia, Indonesia, PNG, Philippines, Singapore, Solomon Islands, Thailand, Timor-Leste.

¶19. (SBU) DPRK human rights resolution: 97(U.S.)-19-65. Last year's Third Committee vote was 95(U.S.)-24-62. This was the fifth time the UNGA has passed a human rights resolution on the DPRK. It was EU-sponsored, the United States cosponsored. The resolution expresses "very serious concern at the persistence of continuing reports of systemic, widespread and grave violations of civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights" and the continued refusal to recognize the mandate of the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the DPRK. The ROK again voted "yes," rather than abstaining as they did in 2007. Laos was not present, having voted "no" in 2008. Mongolia was again deliberately absent because of its strategic location as a neighbor. Tuvalu, which had co-sponsored the

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resolution, continued to vote "yes" on this one.

--Yes: Australia, Fiji, Japan, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Micronesia, Nauru, New Zealand, Palau, PNG, ROK, Samoa, Timor-Leste, Tonga, Tuvalu, Vanuatu.

--No: China, DPRK, Indonesia, Malaysia, Myanmar, Vietnam

--Abstain: Brunei, Cambodia, Philippines, Singapore, Solomon Islands, Thailand.

--Absent: Laos, Mongolia.

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Defamation of Religions and other Third Committee Resolutions  
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120. (U) Another Third Committee priority was to ensure broad cross-regional opposition to the OIC-sponsored "Combating Defamation of Religions" resolution. The resolution seeks to impose limitations on freedom of expression that run contrary to U.S. and international law. While the resolution passed in the Third Committee by a vote of 81-55(U.S.)-43, this was an improvement from last year's Third Committee vote of 85-50(U.S.)-42. The OIC sponsors must be concerned by the steadily diminishing votes for their resolution as more delegations understand the content. On EAP votes, we picked up a "no" vote from Vanuatu, which had abstained in 2008. Both the Marshall Islands and Nauru were absent in the Third Committee but have told the Senior Advisor they will vote "no" in the plenary. We picked up four abstentions: Fiji, Solomon Islands, Tonga, and Tuvalu. Tonga's Permrep promised to shift to a "no" vote in the Plenary. Voting yes were Brunei, Cambodia, China, DPRK, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam. Voting "no" with the U.S. were Australia, Micronesia, New Zealand, Palau, ROK, Samoa, and Vanuatu. Abstaining were Fiji, Japan, Mongolia, PNG, Solomon Islands, Timor-Leste, Tonga, and Tuvalu. Kiribati, the Marshall Islands, and Nauru were absent. This vote will come up again in the Plenary on December 18.

121. (U) On other Third Committee resolutions, many EAP countries warmly welcomed the new U.S. flexibility that enabled us to join consensus for the first time on Right to Food and Rights of the Child. Committee members broke out in spontaneous applause when the U.S. joined consensus on Rights of the Child for the first time since 2002. On Right to Development the United States was no longer the sole "no" vote when the EU stood firm against G-77 excesses and voted "no" as a bloc.

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Non-Proliferation and Disarmament  
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122. (SBU) The U.S. policy of active engagement on multilateral disarmament and nonproliferation issues paid off in the UNGA First Committee (Disarmament and International Security). The United States sought to build on the vision President Obama articulated in his April speech in Prague by engaging resolution sponsors to find as much common ground as possible and to reduce the number of instances where we voted "no" in isolation. As a result, the First Committee greatly reduced the number of issues voted upon this year. The United States cast 10 "no" votes this year, down from 23 last year, and in no case did we vote "no" in isolation. Many EAP delegations, particularly Indonesia, applauded our

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willingness to be flexible and to engage constructively. Japan's delegation accommodated our recommended changes on their resolution on the complete elimination of nuclear weapons. With the Japanese press hovering over the First Committee, the United States went from a "no" vote last year



to co-sponsorship this year - a move that was reportedly front page news in Japan. The ASEAN states, particularly Thailand as the chair, were most helpful in negotiations on their resolution on the Southeast Asia Nuclear Weapon Free Zone Treaty enabling the United States to abstain rather than vote "no" as we had in the past. Satisfactory but hard-fought results were reached on resolutions on the report of the Conference on Disarmament and the Fissile Material Cutoff Treaty. The resolution on a conventional Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) was among the most contentious, but in the end we agreed to support it in return for UK agreement that the ATT negotiations would be conducted by consensus; China, Russia, India, Pakistan, and many Arab states abstained. The Australians were thrilled when the United States co-sponsored and voted for their resolution on the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (reflecting the change in U.S. policy on the CTBT) rather than vote against it as we had done since 2001. In order to gain widespread support, the Australian sponsors, after long and difficult consultations with China, watered down significantly any reference to the DPRK nuclear test. The DPRK still cast the only "no" vote. In general, Singapore, especially on disarmament issues, and Indonesia sought to moderate NAM positions in the First Committee.

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Bloc Politics and EAP Country Performance  
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¶23. (C) ASEAN countries again diverged this UNGA, as seen in their votes on the human rights resolutions on Iran, Burma, and the DPRK. The Philippines and Thailand again split off to abstain on some Middle East issues this session. Because almost all of developing Asia is organized in one regional group or another, Mongolia feels left out, belonging to no sub-regional group and believes this impacts its ability to get elected to UN bodies. Mongolia was thus most pleased to be elected to ECOSOC, after dropping its bid for a SC seat candidacy for 2009-2010. Timor-Leste, a fairly recent UN member, is feeling its way on the issues and, without being a member of a group, is amenable to considering questions on their merits. Their Permrep's task has been complicated this session by the conflicting instructions he is receiving from capital on the Burma human rights vote.

¶24. (C) As in past years, Pacific Island Forum (PIF) countries consult regularly on UN issues, with Nauru currently serving as PIF chair. Counting Australia and New Zealand, the Pacific Islands now number 14, with the addition of Tuvalu as a member in 2000 and Kiribati, Nauru, and Tonga in 1999. Kiribati, due to cost, is the only Pacific island without a UN Mission in New York, although their President participates in September's General Debate. Kiribati has increasingly granted its proxy to New Zealand, enabling Kiribati to vote on the human rights resolutions in the Third Committee, not just in the plenary, for the second year now. One has to start well in advance to line up their proxy. We hope their participation will continue to increase. As in past UNGAs, some delegations made effective use of interns to supplement their small staff. Taiwan has managed to get into the United Nations via the back door, placing interns in a few island delegations. While not exactly a voting bloc, the islands are an influential group whose votes are increasingly solicited by others. The United States can not take these

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votes for granted when we seek support on human rights, Middle East, and other issues. Even our normally solid supporter, the Marshall Islands switched in 2008 to abstaining on the resolution calling for an end to the Cuban embargo, but rejoined the handful of "no" votes this year with the U.S., Israel, and Palau. Iran, Venezuela and Cuba court the islanders too. Several islands have medical students studying in Havana: Kiribati, Nauru, the Solomon Islands, and, most recently, Tuvalu. Tuvalu's Permrep earlier told the Senior Advisor quite blatantly that he votes for whoever can assist Tuvalu; if you can help us on this

project, we will vote for you. "We are here to seek assistance," he maintained.

¶25. (U) The best way to get island votes, in addition to providing assistance, is to devote time and attention to these small delegations and to provide written talking points for them to share with their capitals when needed. Most regular contact in New York ends after the Senior Advisor departs. The islanders greatly appreciated Ambassador Rice's hosting them to lunch last January and meeting with them on climate change just before Copenhagen. We need to be alert to opportunities to continue the outreach. For the 65th UNGA, the Senior Advisor would recommend that Secretary Clinton again meet with the Pacific Island heads of state and government. This high-level attention does translate into goodwill and votes at the United Nations.

¶26. (U) EAP countries good showing this UNGA - with the Pacific Islands often our best allies in the UN - was attributable to concerted efforts on all fronts: in New York, in Washington, and in capitals. Our embassies in particular deserve our gratitude for their lobbying efforts with host governments, often on short notice.

\*\*\* Current Classification \*\*\* CONFIDENTIAL  
RICE